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A REVIEW

OF M. STANISLAS JULIEN'S "VOYAGES DES PÈLERINS BOUDDHISTES."

BY

MAX MÜLLER, M.A.,

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

REPRINTED, WITH ADDITIONS, FROM THE 'TIMES' OF APRIL 17TH AND 20TH.

TOGETHER WITH

A LETTER ON THE ORIGNAL MEANING OF

'NIRVÂ*N*A.'

WILLIAMS AND NORGATE,

14, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON;

AND

20, SOUTH FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH.

PARIS: B. DUPRAT.

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Voyages des Pèlerins Bouddhistes.—Vol. I. Histoire de la Vie de Hiouen-thsang, et de ses Voyages dans l'Inde, depuis l'an 629 jusqu'en 645, par Hoeili et Yen-thsong; traduite du Chinois par Stanislas Julien.

Vol. II. Mémoires sur les Contrées Occidentales, traduits du Sanscrit en Chinois, en l'an 648, par Hiouen-thsang, et du Chinois en Français, par Stanislas Julien. Paris, 1853-57: B. Duprat. London and Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate.

M. Stanislas Julien has commenced the publication of a work entitled *Voyages des Pèlerins Bouddhistes.* The first volume, published in the year 1853, contains the biography of Hiouen-thsang, who, in the middle of the seventh century A.D., travelled from China through Central Asia to India. The second, which has just reached us, gives us the first portion of Hiouen-thsang's own diary. There are not many books of travel which can be compared with these volumes. Hiouen-thsang passed through countries which few had visited before him. He describes parts of the world which no one has explored since and where even our modern maps contain hardly more than the ingenious conjectures of Alexander von Humboldt. His observations are minute; his geographical, statistical, and historical remarks most accurate and trustworthy. The chief object of his travels was to study the religion of Buddha, the great reformer of India. Some Chinese

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pilgrims visited India before, several after, his time. Hiouen-thsang, however, is considered by the Chinese themselves as the most distinguished of these pilgrims, and M. Stanislas Julien has rightly assigned to him the first place in his collection.

In order to understand what Hiouen-thsang was, and to appreciate his life and his labours, we must first cast a glance at the history of a religion which, however unattractive and even mischievous it may appear to ourselves, inspired her votary with the true spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice. That religion has now existed for exactly 2,400 years. To millions and millions of human beings it has been the only preparation for a higher life placed within their reach. And even at the present day it counts among the hordes of Asia a more numerous array of believers than any other faith, not excluding Mohammedanism or Christianity. The religion of Buddha took its origin in India about the middle of the sixth century, B.C., but it did not assume its political importance till about the time of Alexander's invasion. We know little, therefore, of its first origin and spreading, because the canonical works on which we must chiefly rely for information belong to a much later period, and are strongly tinged with a legendary character. The very existence of such a being as Buddha, the son of *S*uddhodana, King of Kapilavastu, has been doubted. But what can never be doubted is this, that Buddhism, such as we find it in Russia[1] and Sweden[2] on the very threshold of European civilisation, in the north of Asia, in Mongolia, Tatary, China, Tibet,

[1] See W. Spottiswoode's *Tarantasse Journey*, p. 220, Visit to the Buddhist Temple.

[2] The only trace of the influence of Buddhism among the *K*udic races, the Fins, Laps, etc., is found in the name of their priests and sorcerers, the Shamans. 'Shaman' is supposed to be a corruption of *S*rama*n*a, the name of

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Nepal, Siam, Burmah, and Ceylon, had its origin in India. Doctrines similar to those of Buddha existed in that country long before his time. We can trace them like meandering roots below the surface long before we reach the point where the roots strike up into a stem, and the stem branches off again into fruit-bearing branches. What was original and new in Buddha was his changing a philosophical system into a practical doctrine; his taking the wisdom of the few, and coining as much of it as he thought genuine for the benefit of the many; his breaking with the traditional formalities of the past, and proclaiming for the first time, in spite of castes and creeds, the equality of the rich and the poor, the foolish and the wise, the 'twice-born' and the outcast. Buddhism, as a religion and as a political fact, was a reaction against Brahmanism, though it retained much of that more primitive form of faith and worship. Buddhism, in its historical growth, presupposes Brahmanism, and, however hostile the mutual relation of these two religions may have been at different periods of Indian history, it can be shown, without much difficulty, that the latter was but a natural consequence of the former.

The ancient religion of the Âryan inhabitants of India had started, like the religion of the Greeks, the Romans, the Germans, Slaves, and Celts, with a simple and intelligible mythological phraseology. In the Veda—for there is but one real Veda—the names of all the so-called gods or

Buddha, and of Buddhist priests in general. The ancient mythological religion of the *Kudic* races has nothing in common with Buddhism. See Castren's *Lectures on Finnish Mythology*, 1853. Finland was ceded by Sweden to Russia in 1809. See the Author's *Survey of Languages*, 2nd edition, p. 116. Shamanism found its way from India to Siberia *viâ* Tibet, China, and Mongolia. Rules on the formation of magic figures, on the treatment of diseases by charms, on the worship of evil spirits, on the acquisition of supernatural powers, on charms, incantations, and other branches of Shaman witchcraft, are found in the Stan-gyour, or the second part of the Tibetan canon, and in some of the late Tantras of the Nepalese collection.

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Devas betray their original physical character and meaning without disguise. The fire was praised and invoked by the name of Agni (ignis); the earth by the name of P*ri*thvî (the broad); the sky by the name of Dyu (Jupiter), and afterwards of Indra; the firmament and the waters by the name of *Οὔρανος*. The sun was invoked by many names, such as Sûrya, Savit*ri*, Vish*n*u or Mitra; and the dawn rejoiced in the titles of Ushas, Urva*s*î, Ahanâ, and Sûryâ. Nor was the moon forgotten. For though it is mentioned but rarely under its usual name of *K*andra, it is alluded to under the more sacred appellation of Soma; and each of its four phases had received its own denomination. There is hardly any part of nature, if it could impress the human mind in any way with the ideas of a higher power, of order, eternity, or beneficence, —whether the winds, or the rivers, or the trees, or the mountains—without a name and representative in the early Hindú Pantheon. No doubt there existed in the human mind, from the very beginning, something, whether we call it a suspicion, an innate idea, an intuition, or a sense of the Divine. What distinguishes man from the rest of the animal creation is chiefly that ineradicable feeling of dependence and reliance upon some higher power, a consciousness of bondage from which the very name of 'religion' was derived. 'It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves.' The presence of that power was felt everywhere, and nowhere more clearly and strongly than in the rising and setting of the sun, in the change of day and night, of spring and winter, of birth and death. But, although the Divine presence was felt everywhere, it was impossible in that early period of thought, and with a language incapable as yet of expressing anything but material objects, to conceive the idea of God in its purity and

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fulness, or to assign to it an adequate and worthy expression. Children cannot think the thoughts of men, and the poets of the Veda could not speak the language of Aristotle. It was by a slow process that the human mind elaborated the idea of one absolute and supreme Godhead; and by a still slower process that the human language matured a word to express that idea. A period of growth was inevitable, and those who, from a mere guess of their own, do not hesitate to speak authoritatively of a primeval revelation which imparted to the pagan world the idea of the Godhead in all its purity forget that, however pure and sublime and spiritual that revelation might have been, there was no language capable as yet of expressing the high and immaterial conceptions of that Heaven-sent message. The real history of religion, during the earliest mythological period, represents to us a slow process of fermentation in thought and language, with its various interruptions, its overflowings, its coolings, its deposits, and its gradual clearing from all extraneous and foreign admixture. This is not only the case among the Indo-European or Aryan races in India, in Greece, and in Germany. In Peru, and wherever the primitive formations of the intellectual world crop out, the process is exactly the same. 'The religion of the sun,' as it has been boldly said by the author of the *Spanish Conquest in America,* 'was inevitable.' It was like a deep furrow which that heavenly luminary drew, in its silent procession from east to west, over the fallow mind of the gazing multitude; and in the impression left there by the first rising and setting of the sun there lay the dark seed of a faith in a more than human being, the first intimation of a life without beginning, of a world without end. Manifold seed fell afterwards into the soil once broken. Something divine was

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discovered in everything that moved and lived. Names were stammered forth in anxious haste, and no single name could fully express what lay hidden in the human mind and wanted expression,—the idea of an absolute, and perfect, and supreme, and immortal Essence. Thus a countless host of so-called gods was called into being, and for a time seemed to satisfy the wants of a thoughtless multitude. But there were thoughtful men at all times, and their reason protested against the contradictions of a mythological phraseology, though it had been hallowed by sacred customs and traditions. That rebellious reason had been at work from the very first, always ready to break the yoke of names and formulas which no longer expressed what they were intended to express. The idea which had yearned for utterance was the idea of a supreme and absolute Power, and that yearning was not satisfied by such names as Kronos, Zeus, and Apollon. The very sound of such a word as 'God,' used in the plural, jarred on the ear, as if we were to speak of two universes, or of a single twin. There are many words, as Greek and Latin grammarians tell us, which, if used in the plural, have a different meaning from what they have in the singular. The Latin *ædes* means a temple; if used in the plural it means a house. *Deus* and Θεός ought to be added to the same class of words. The idea of supreme perfection excluded limitation, and the idea of God excluded the possibility of many gods. This may seem language too abstract and metaphysical for the early times of which we are speaking. But the ancient poets of the Vedic hymns have expressed the same thought with perfect clearness and simplicity. In the Rig-Veda I., 164, 46, we read:—

> 'That which is one the sages speak of in many ways—they call it Agni, Yama, Matarisvan.'

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And again, Rig-Veda, X., 121—

'In the beginning there arose the Source of golden light—He was the only born Lord of all that is. He stablished the earth, and this sky;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

'He who gives life, He who gives strength; whose blessing all the bright gods desire; whose shadow is immortality; whose shadow is death;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

'He who through His power is the only King of the breathing and awakening world;—He who governs all, man and beast;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

'He whose power these snowy mountains, whose power the sea proclaims, with the distant river—He whose these regions are, as it were His two arms;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

'He through whom the sky is bright and the earth firm—He through whom heaven was stablished—nay, the highest heaven—He who measured out the light in the air;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

'He to whom heaven and earth, standing firm by His will, look up, trembling inwardly—He over whom the rising sun shines forth;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

'Wherever the mighty water-clouds went, where they placed the seed and lit the fire, thence arose He who is the only life of the bright gods;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

'He who by His might looked even over the water-clouds, the clouds which gave strength and lit the sacrifice, He *who is God above all gods;*—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

'May He not destroy us—He the creator of the earth; or He, the righteous, who created heaven; He who also created the bright and mighty waters;—Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?'

Besides the plurality of gods, which was sure to lead to their destruction, there was a taint of mortality which they could not throw off. They all derived their being

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from the life of nature. The god who represented the sun was liable, in the mythological language of antiquity, to all the accidents which threatened the solar luminary. Though he might rise in immortal youth in the morning, he was conquered by the shadows of the night, and the powers of winter seemed to overthrow his heavenly throne. There is nothing in nature free from change, and the gods of nature fell under the thraldom of nature's laws. There must be one God, there must be one unchanging Deity. This was the silent conviction of the human mind. There are many gods, liable to all the vicissitudes of life; this was everywhere the answer of mythological religion.

It is curious to observe in how various ways these two opposite principles were kept for a time from open conflict, and how long the heathen temples resisted the enemy which was slowly and imperceptibly undermining their very foundations. In Greece this mortal element, inherent in all gods, was eliminated to a great extent by the conception of heroes. Whatever was too human in the ancient legends told of Zeus and Apollon was transferred to so-called half-gods or heroes, who were represented as the sons or favourites of the gods, whose fate they bore under a slightly altered name. The twofold character of Herakles as a god and as a hero is acknowledged even by Herodotos, and some of his epithets would have been sufficient to indicate his solar and originally divine character. But, in order to make some of the legends told of the solar deity possible or conceivable, it was necessary to represent Herakles as a more human being, and to make him rise to the seat of the Immortals only after he had endured toils and sufferings incompatible with the dignity of an Olympian god. We find the same idea in Peru, only that there it led

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to different results. A thinking, or, as he was called, a freethinking, Inca[1] remarked that this perpetual travelling of the sun was a sign of servitude,[2] and he threw doubts upon the divine nature of such an unquiet thing as that great luminary appeared to him to be. And this misgiving led to a tradition which, even should it be unfounded in history, had some truth in itself, that there was in Peru an earlier worship—that of an invisible Deity, the Creator of the world,—Pachacamac. In Greece, also, there are signs of a similar craving after the 'Unknown God.' A supreme God was wanted, and Zeus, the stripling of Creta, was raised to that rank. He became God above all gods—*ἁπάντων κύριος*, as Pindar calls him. Yet more was wanted than a mere Zeus; and thus a supreme Fate or Spell was imagined before which all the gods, and even Zeus, had to bow. And even this Fate was not allowed to remain supreme, and there was something in the destinies of man which was called *ὑπέρμορον* or 'beyond Fate.' The most awful solution, however, of the problem belongs to Teutonic mythology. Here, also, some heroes were introduced; but their death was only the beginning of the final catastrophe. 'All gods must die.' Such is the last word of that religion which had grown up in the forests of Germany, and found a last refuge among the glaciers and volcanoes of Iceland. The death of Sigurd, the descendant of Odin, could not avert the death of Balder, the son of Odin; and the death of Balder was soon to be followed by the death of Odin himself, and of all the immortal gods.

[1] Helps, *The Spanish Conquest*, iii, 503. 'Que cosa tam inquieta non le parescia ser Dios.'

[2] On the servitude of the gods, see the Essay on Comparative Mythology. *Oxford Essays*, 1856, p. 69.

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All this was inevitable, and Prometheus, the man of forethought, could safely predict the fall of Zeus. The struggles by which reason and faith overthrow tradition and superstition vary in different countries and at different times; but the final victory is always on their side. In India the same antagonism manifested itself, but what there seemed a victory of reason threatened to become the destruction of all religious faith. At first there was hardly a struggle. On the primitive mythological stratum of thought two new formations arose—the Brahmanical philosophy and the Brahmanical ceremonial; the one opening all avenues of philosophical thought, the other fencing all religious feeling within the narrowest barriers. Both derived their authority from the same source. Both professed to carry out the meaning and purpose of the Veda. Thus we see on the one side, the growth of a numerous and powerful priesthood, and the establishment of a ceremonial which embraced every moment of a man's life from his birth to his death. There was no event which might have moved the heart to a spontaneous outpouring of praise or thanksgiving which was not regulated by priestly formulas. Every prayer was prescribed, every sacrifice determined. Every god had his share, and the claims of each deity on the adoration of the faithful were set down with such punctiliousness, the danger of offending their pride was represented in such vivid colours, that no one would venture to approach their presence without the assistance of a well-paid staff of masters of divine ceremonies. It was impossible to avoid sin without the help of the Brahmans. They alone knew the food that might properly be eaten, the air which might properly be breathed, the dress which might properly be worn. They alone could tell

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what god should be invoked, what sacrifice be offered, and the slightest mistake of pronunciation, the slightest neglect about clarified butter, or the length of the ladle in which it was to be offered, might bring destruction upon the head of the unassisted worshipper. No nation was ever so completely priestridden as the Hindús under the sway of the Brahmanic law. Yet, on the other side, the same people were allowed to indulge in the most unrestrained freedom of thought, and in the schools of their philosophy the very names of their gods were never mentioned. Their existence was neither denied nor asserted; they were of no greater importance in the system of the world of thought than trees or mountains, men or animals; and to offer sacrifices to them with a hope of rewards, so far from being meritorious, was considered as dangerous to that emancipation to which a clear perception of philosophical truth was to lead the patient student. There was one system which taught that there existed but one Being, without a second; that everything else which seemed to exist was but a dream and illusion, and that this illusion might be removed by a true knowledge of the one Being. There was another system which admitted two principles—one a subjective and self-existent mind, the other matter, endowed with qualities. Here the world, with its joys and sorrows, was explained as the result of the subjective Self, reflecting itself in the mirror of matter; and final emancipation was obtained by turning away the eyes from the play of nature, and being absorbed in the knowledge of the true and absolute Self. A third system started with the admission of atoms, and explained every effect, including the elements and the mind, animals, men, and gods, from the concurrence of these atoms. In fact, as M. Cousin remarked many years ago, the

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history of the philosophy of India is 'un abrégé de l'histoire de la philosophie.' The germs of all these systems are traced back to the Vedas, Brâhmanas, and the Upanishads, and the man who believed in any of them was considered as orthodox as the devout worshipper of Agni—the one was saved by knowledge and faith, the other by works and faith.

Such was the state of the Hindú mind when Buddhism arose; or, rather, such was the state of the Hindú mind which gave rise to Buddhism. Buddha himself went through the school of the Brahmans. He performed their penances, he studied their philosophy, and he at last claimed the name of the Buddha, or the Enlightened, when he threw away the whole ceremonial, with its sacrifices, superstitions, penances, and castes, as worthless, and changed the complicated systems of philosophy into a short doctrine of salvation. This doctrine of salvation has been called pure Atheism and Nihilism, and it no doubt was liable to both charges in its metaphysical character, and in that form in which we chiefly know it. It was Atheistic, not because it denied the existence of such gods as Indra and Brahma. Buddha did not even condescend to deny their existence. But it was Atheistic, like the Sânkhya philosophy, which admitted but one subjective Self, and considered creation as an illusion of that Self, imaging itself for a while in the mirror of nature. As there was no reality in creation, there could be no real Creator. All that seemed to exist was the result of ignorance. To remove that ignorance was to remove the cause of all that seemed to exist. How a religion which taught the annihilation of all existence, of all thought, of all individuality and personality, as the highest object of all endeavours, could have laid hold of the minds of millions of human

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beings, and how at the same time, by enforcing the duties of morality, justice, kindness, and self-sacrifice, it could have exercised a decided beneficial influence, not only on the natives of India, but on the lowest barbarians of Central Asia, is one of the riddles which no philosophy has yet been able to solve. The morality which it teaches is not a morality of expediency and rewards. Virtue is not enjoined because it necessarily leads to happiness. No; virtue is to be practised, but happiness is to be shunned, and the only reward for virtue is that it subdues the passions, and thus prepares the human mind for that knowledge which is to end in complete annihilation. There are ten commandments which Buddha imposes on his disciples.[1] They are—not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie, not to get intoxicated, to abstain from unseasonable meals, to abstain from public spectacles, to abstain from expensive dresses, not to have a large bed, not to receive silver or gold. The duties of those who embraced a religious life were more severe. They were not allowed to wear any dress except rags collected in cemeteries, and these rags they had to sew together with their own hands; a yellow cloak was to be thrown over these rags. Their food was to be extremely simple, and they were not to possess anything, except what they could get by collecting alms from door to door in their wooden bowl. They had but one meal in the morning, and were not allowed to touch any food after midday. They were to live in forests, not in cities, and their only shelter was to be the shadow of a tree. There they were to sit, to spread their carpet, but not to lie down, even during sleep. They were allowed to enter the nearest city or village in order to beg, but

[1] See Burnouf, *Lotus de la bonne Loi*, p. 444. Barthélémy Saint-Hilaire, *Du Bouddhisme*, p. 132. Ch. F. Neumann, *Catechism of the Shamans*.

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they had to return to their forest before night, and the only change which was allowed, or rather prescribed, was when they had to spend some nights in the cemeteries, there to meditate on the vanity of all things. And what was the object of all this asceticism? Simply to guide each individual towards that path which would finally bring him to Nirvâ*n*a, to utter extinction or annihilation. The very definition of virtue was that it helped man to cross over to the other shore, and that other shore was not death, but cessation of all being. Thus charity was considered a virtue; modesty, patience, courage, contemplation, and science, all were virtues, but they were practised only as a means of arriving at deliverance. Buddha himself exhibited the perfection of all these virtues. His charity knew no bounds. When he saw a tigress starved, and unable to feed her cubs, he made a charitable oblation of his body to be devoured by them. Hiouen-thsang visited the place on the banks of the Indus where this miracle was supposed to have happened, and he remarks that the soil is still red there from the blood of Buddha, and that the trees and flowers have the same colour.[1] As to the modesty of Buddha, nothing could exceed it. One day, King Prasena*g*it, the protector of Buddha, called on him to perform miracles, in order to silence his adversaries, the Brahmans. Buddha consented. He performed the required miracles; but he exclaimed, 'Great King, I do not teach the law to my pupils, telling them, Go, ye saints, and before the eyes of the Brahmans and householders perform, by means of your supernatural powers, miracles greater than any man can perform. I tell them, when I teach them the law, Live, ye saints, hiding your good works and showing your sins.' And yet, all this self-sacrificing charity, all this

[1] Vol. i., p. 89; vol. ii., p. 167.

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self-sacrificing humility, by which the life of Buddha was distinguished throughout, and which he preached to the multitudes that came to listen to him, had but one object, and that object was final annihilation. It is impossible almost to believe it, and yet when we turn away our eyes from the pleasing picture of that high morality which Buddha preached for the first time to all classes of men, and look into the dark pages of his code of religious metaphysics, we find no other explanation. Fortunately, the millions who embraced the doctrines of Buddha, and were saved by it from the depths of barbarism, brutality, and selfishness, were unable to fathom the meaning of his metaphysical doctrines. With them the Nirvâ*n*a, to which they aspired, became only a relative deliverance from the miseries of human life; nay, it took the bright colours of a Paradise, to be regained by the pious worshipper of Buddha. But was this the meaning of Buddha himself? In his 'Four Verities' he does not, indeed, define Nirvâ*n*a, except by cessation of all pain; but when he traces the cause of pain, and teaches the means of destroying not only pain itself, but the cause of pain, we shall see that his Nirvâ*n*a assumes a very different meaning. His 'Four Verities' are very simple. The first asserts the existence of pain; the second asserts that the cause of pain lies in sin; the third asserts that pain may cease by Nirvâ*n*a; the fourth shows the way that leads to Nirvâ*n*a. This way to Nirvâ*n*a consists in eight things—right faith (orthodoxy), right judgment (logic), right language (veracity), right purpose (honesty), right practice (religious life), right obedience (lawful life), right memory, and right meditation. All these precepts might be understood as part of a simply moral code, closing with a kind of mystic meditation on the highest object of thought, and

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with a yearning after deliverance from all worldly ties. Similar systems have prevailed in many parts of the world, without denying the existence of an absolute Being, or of a something towards which the human mind tends, in which it is absorbed or even annihilated. Awful as such a mysticism may appear, yet it leaves still something that exists, it acknowledges a feeling of dependence in man. It knows of a first cause, though it may have nothing to predicate of it except that it is *τὸ κινοῦν ἀκινητόν*. A return is possible from that desert. The first cause may be called to life again. It may take the names of Creator, Preserver, Ruler; and when the simplicity and helplessness of the child have re-entered the heart of man, the name of father will come back to the lips which had uttered in vain all the names of a philosophical despair. But from the Nirvâ*n*a of the Buddhist metaphysician there is no return. He starts from the idea that the highest object is to escape pain. Life in his eyes is nothing but misery; birth the cause of all evil, from which even death cannot deliver him, because he believes in an eternal cycle of existence, or in transmigration. There is no deliverance from evil, except by breaking through the prison walls, not only of life, but of existence; and by extirpating the cause of existence. What, then, is the cause of existence? The cause of existence, says the Buddhist metaphysician, is attachment —an inclination towards something; and this attachment arises from thirst or desire. Desire presupposes perception of the object desired; perception presupposes contact; contact, at least a sentient contact, presupposes the senses; and, as the senses can only perform what has form and name, or what is distinct, distinction is the real cause of all the effects which end in existence, birth, and

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pain. Now, this distinction is itself the result of conceptions or ideas; but these ideas, so far from being, as in Greek philosophy, the true and everlasting forms of the Absolute, are themselves mere illusions, the effects of ignorance (avidyâ). Ignorance, therefore, is really the primary cause of all that seems to exist. To know that ignorance, as the root of all evil, is the same as to destroy it, and with it all effects that flowed from it. In order to see how this doctrine affects the individual, let us watch the last moments of Buddha. He enters into the first stage of meditation when he feels freedom from sin, acquires a knowledge of the nature of all things, and has no desire except that of Nirvâ*n*a. But he still feels pleasure,—he even uses his reasoning and discriminating powers. The use of these powers ceases in the second stage of meditation, when nothing remains but a desire after Nirvâ*n*a, and a general feeling of satisfaction, arising from his intellectual perfection. That satisfaction, also, is extinguished in the third stage. Indifference succeeds; yet there is still self-consciousness, and a certain amount of physical pleasure. These last remnants are destroyed in the fourth stage; memory fades away, all pleasure and pain are gone, and the doors of Nirvâ*n*a now open before him. After having passed these four stages once, Buddha went through them a second time, but he died before he attained again to the fourth stage. We must soar still higher, and though we may feel giddy and disgusted, we must sit out the tragedy till the curtain falls. After the four stages of meditation[1] are passed, the Buddha (and every being is to become a Buddha)

[1] These 'four stages' are described in the same manner in the canonical books of Ceylon and Nepal, and may therefore safely be ascribed to that original form of Buddhism from which the Southern and the Northern schools branched off at a later period. See Burnouf, *Lotus de la bonne Loi*, p. 800.

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enters into the infinity of space; then into the infinity of intelligence; and thence he passes into the region of nothing. But even here there is no rest. There is still something left—the idea of the nothing in which he rejoices. That also must be destroyed, and it is destroyed in the fourth and last region, where there is not even the idea of a nothing left, and where there is complete rest, undisturbed by nothing, or what is not nothing.[1] There are few persons who will take the trouble of reasoning out such hallucinations; least of all, persons who are accustomed to the sober language of Greek philosophy; and it is the more interesting to hear the opinion which one of the best Aristotelean scholars of the present day, after a patient examination of the authentic documents of Buddhism, has formed of its system of metaphysics. M. Barthélémy Saint-Hilaire, in a review on Buddhism, published in the *Journal des Savants*, says:—

'Buddhism has no God; it has not even the confused and vague notion of a Universal Spirit in which the human soul, according to the orthodox doctrine of Brahmanism, and the Sânkhya philosophy, may be absorbed. Nor does it admit nature, in the proper sense of the word, and it ignores that profound division between spirit and matter which forms the system and the glory of Kapila. It confounds man with all that surrounds him, all the while preaching to him the laws of virtue. Buddhism, therefore, cannot unite the human soul, which it does not even mention, with a God, whom it ignores; nor with nature, which it does not know better. Nothing remained but to annihilate the soul; and in order to be quite sure that the soul may not re-appear under some new form in this world, which has been cursed as the abode of illusion and misery, Buddhism destroys its very elements, and never gets tired of glorying in this achievement. What more is wanted; If this is not the absolute nothing, what is Nirvâ*n*a?'

[1] See Burnouf, *Lotus de la bonne Loi*, p. 814.

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Such religion, we should say, was made for a mad house. But Buddhism was an advance, if compared with Brahmanism; it has stood its ground for centuries, and if truth could be decided by majorities, the show of hands at the present day would be in favour of Buddha. The metaphysics of Buddhism, like the metaphysics of most religions, not excluding our own Gnosticism and Mysticism, were beyond the reach of all, except a few hardened philosophers or ecstatic dreamers. Human nature could not be changed. Out of the very nothing it made a new Paradise; and he who had left no place in the whole universe for a divine Being, was deified himself by the multitudes who wanted a person whom they could worship, a friend before whom they could pour out their most secret griefs, a King whose help they might invoke. And there remained the code of a pure morality, proclaimed by Buddha. There remained the spirit of charity, kindness, and universal pity with which he had inspired his disciples.[1] There remained the simplicity of the ceremonial he had taught, the equality of all men which he had declared, the religious toleration which he had preached from the beginning. There remained much, therefore, to account for the rapid strides which his doctrine made from Ceylon to the Tundras of the Samoyedes, and we shall see in the simple story of the life of Hiouen-thsang that Buddhism, with all its defects, has had its heroes, its martyrs, and its saints.

[1] See the *Dhammapadam*, a Páli work on Buddhist ethics, lately edited by V. Fausböll, a distinguished pupil of Professor Westergaard, at Copenhagen. The Rev. Spence Hardy (*Eastern Monachism*, p. 169) writes: 'A collection might be made from the precepts of this work, that in the purity of its ethics could scarcely be equalled from any other heathen author.' Mr. Knighton, when speaking of the same work in his *History of Ceylon* (p. 77), remarks: 'In it we have exemplified a code of morality, and a list of precepts, which, for pureness, excellence, and wisdom, is only second to that of the Divine Lawgiver himself.'

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Hiouen-thsang, born in China more than a thousand years after the death of Buddha, was a believer in Buddhism. He dedicated his whole life to the study of that religion; travelling from his native country to India, visiting every place mentioned in Buddhist history or tradition, acquiring the ancient language in which the canonical books of the Buddhists were written, studying commentaries, discussing points of difficulty, and defending the orthodox faith at public councils against disbebelievers and schismatics. Buddhism had grown and changed since the death of its founder, but it had lost nothing of its vitality. At a very early period a proselytizing spirit awoke among the disciples of the Indian reformer, an element entirely new in the history of ancient religions. No Jew, no Greek, no Roman, no Brahman ever thought of converting people to his own national form of worship. Religion was looked upon as private or national property. It was to be guarded against strangers. The most sacred names of the gods, the prayers by which their favour could be gained, were kept secret. No religion, however, was more exclusive than that of the Brahmans. A Brahman was born, nay, twice-born. He could not be made. Not even the lowest caste, that of the *S*ûdras, would open its ranks to a stranger. Here lay the secret of Buddha's success. He addressed himself to castes and outcasts. He promised salvation to all; and he commanded his disciples to preach his doctrine in all places and to all men. A sense of duty, extending from the narrow limits of the house, the village, and the country to the widest circle of mankind, a feeling of sympathy and brotherhood towards all men, the idea, in fact, of humanity, were first pronounced by Buddha. In the third Buddhist Council, the acts of which have been pre-

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served to us in the 'Mahavanso,'[1] we hear of missionaries being sent to the chief countries beyond India. This council took place 308 B.C., 235 years after the death of Buddha, in the 17th year of the reign of the famous King Asoka, whose edicts have been preserved to us on rock inscriptions in various parts of India. There are sentences in these inscriptions of Asoka which might be read with advantage by our own missionaries, though they are now more than 2000 years old. Thus it is written on the rocks of Girnar, Dhauli, and Kapurdigiri—

'Piyadasi, the King beloved of the gods, desires that the ascetics of all creeds might reside in all places. All these ascetics profess alike the command which people should exercise over themselves, and the purity of the soul. But people have different opinions, and different inclinations.'

And again:

'A man ought to honour his own faith only; but he should never abuse the faith of others. It is thus that he will do no harm to anybody. There are even circumstances where the religion of others ought to be honoured. And in acting thus, a man fortifies his own faith, and assists the faith of others. He who acts otherwise, diminishes his own faith, and hurts the faith of others.'

Those who have no time to read the voluminous works of the late E. Burnouf on Buddhism, his *Introduction à l'Histoire du Buddhisme*, and his translation of *Le Lotus de la bonne Loi*, will find a very interesting and lucid account of these councils, and edicts and missions, and the history of Buddhism in general, in a work lately published by Mrs. Speir, *Life in Ancient India.* Buddhism spread in the south to Ceylon, in the north to Kashmír, the Himalayan countries, Tibet, and China. One Buddhist missionary is mentioned in the Chinese annals as early

[1] *Mahavanso*, ed. G. Turnour, Ceylon, 1837, p. 71.

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as 217 B.C.;[1] and about the year 120 B.C. a Chinese General, after defeating the barbarous tribes north of the Desert of Gobi, brought back as a trophy a golden statue—the statue of Buddha.[2] It was not, however, till the year 65 A.D. that Buddhism was officially recognized by the Emperor Ming-ti[3] as a third State religion in China. Ever since, it has shared equal honours with the doctrines of Confucius and Lao-tse, in the Celestial Empire, and it is but lately that these three established religions have had to fear the encroachments of a new rival in the creed of the Chief of the rebels.

After Buddhism had been introduced into China, the first care of its teachers was to translate the sacred works from Sanskrit, in which they were originally written, into Chinese. We read of the Emperor, Ming-ti,[4] of the dynasty of Han, sending Tsaï-in and other high officials to India, in order to study there the doctrine of Buddha. They engaged the services of two learned Buddhists, Matânga and Tchou-fa-lan, and some of the most important Buddhist works were translated by them into Chinese. *The Life of Buddha*, the *Lalita-vistara*,[5] a Sanskrit work which, on account of its style and language, had been referred by Oriental scholars to a much more modern period of Indian literature, can now safely be ascribed to an ante-Christian era, for it was translated from Sanskrit into Chinese, as one of the canonical books of Buddhism, as early as the year 76 A.D. The same work was translated also into Tibetan; and an edition of it—the first Tibetan work

[1] See *Foe Koue Ki*, p. 41, and xxxviii. Preface.
[2] See *Foe Koue Ki*, p. 41.
[3] *Lalita-Vistara*, ed Foucaux, p. xvii. n.
[4] *Lalita-Vistara*, p. 17.
[5] Two parts of the Sanskrit text have been published in the *Bibliotheca Indica.*

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printed in Europe—published in Paris by M. E. Foucaux, reflects high credit on that distinguished scholar, and on the Government which supports these studies in the most liberal and enlightened spirit. The intellectual intercourse between the Indian peninsula and the northern continent of Asia remained uninterrupted for many centuries. Missions were sent from China to India, to report on the political and geographical state of the country, but the chief object of interest which attracted public embassies and private pilgrims across the Himalayan mountains was the religion of Buddha. About three hundred years after the public recognition of Buddhism by the Emperor Ming-ti, the great stream of Buddhist pilgrims began to flow from China to India. The first account which we possess of these pilgrimages refers to the travels of Fa-hian, who visited India towards the end of the fourth century. His travels have been translated by Rémusat, but M. Julien promises a new and more correct translation. After Fa-hian, we have the travels of Hoei-seng and Song-yun, who were sent to India, in 518, by command of the Empress, with a view of collecting sacred books and relics. Of Hiouen-thsang, who follows next in time, we possess, at present, eight out of twelve books; and there is reason to hope that the last four books of his Journal will soon follow in M. Julien's translation. After Hiouen-thsang, the chief works of Chinese pilgrims are the *Itineraries* of the fifty-six monks, published in 730, and the travels of Khi-nie, who visited India in 964, at the head of three hundred pilgrims. India was for a time the Holy Land of China. There lay the scene of the life and death of the great teacher; there were the monuments commemorating the chief events of his life; there the shrines where his relics might be worshipped; there the monas-

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teries where tradition had preserved his sayings and his doings; there the books where his doctrine might be studied in its original purity; there the schools where the tenets of different sects which had sprung up in the course of time might best be acquired.

Some of the pilgrims and envoys have left us accounts of their travels, and, in the absence of anything like a historical literature in India itself, these Chinese works are of the utmost importance for gaining an insight into the social, political, and religious history of that country from the beginning of our era to the time of the Mohammedan conquest. The importance of Mohammedan writers, so far as they treat on the history of India during the middle ages, was soon recognised, and in a memoir lately published by the most eminent Arabic scholar of France, M. Reinaud, new and valuable historical materials have been collected—materials doubly valuable in India, where no native historian has ever noted down the passing events of the day. But, although the existence of similar documents in Chinese was known, and although men of the highest literary eminence—such as Humboldt, Biot, and others—had repeatedly urged the necessity of having a translation of the early travels of the Chinese pilgrims, it seemed almost as if our curiosity was never to be satisfied. France has been the only country where Chinese scholarship has ever flourished, and it was a French scholar, Abel Rémusat, who undertook at last the translation of one of the Chinese Pilgrims. Rémusat died before his work was published, and his translation of the travels of Fa-hian, edited by M. Landresse, remained for a long time without being followed up by any other. Nor did the work of that eminent scholar answer all expectations. Most of the proper names—the

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names of countries, towns, mountains, and rivers, the titles of books, and the whole Buddhistic phraseology, were so disguised in their Chinese dress that it was impossible to discover their original form.

The Chinese alphabet was never intended to represent the sound of words. It was in its origin a hieroglyphic system, each word having its own graphic representative. Nor would it have been possible to write Chinese in any other way. Chinese is a monosyllabic language. No word is allowed more than one consonant and one vowel,—the vowels including diphthongs and nasal vowels. Hence the possible number of words is extremely small, and the number of significative sounds in the Chinese language is said to be no more than 450. No language, however, could be satisfied with so small a vocabulary, and in Chinese, as in other monosyllabic dialects, each word, as it was pronounced with various accents and intonations, was made to convey a large number of meanings; so that the total number of words, or rather of ideas, expressed in Chinese, is said to amount to 43,496. Hence a graphic representation of the mere sound of words would have been perfectly useless, and it was absolutely necessary to resort to hieroglyphical writing, enlarged by the introduction of determinative signs. Nearly the whole immense dictionary of Chinese—at least twenty-nine thirtieths—consists of combined signs, one part indicating the general sound, the other determining its special meaning. With such a system of writing it was possible to represent Chinese, but impossible to convey either the sound or the meaning of any other language. Besides, some of the most common sounds—such as r, b, d, and the short a—are unknown in Chinese.

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How, then, were the translators to render Sanskrit names in Chinese? The most rational plan would have been to select as many Chinese signs as there were Sanskrit letters, and to express one and the same letter in Sanskrit always by one and the same sign in Chinese; or, if the conception of a consonant without a vowel, and of a vowel without a consonant, was too much for a Chinese understanding, to express at least the same syllabic sound in Sanskrit, by one and the same syllabic sign in Chinese. A similar system is adopted at the present day, when the Chinese find themselves under the necessity of writing the names of Lord Palmerston or Sir John Bowring; but, instead of adopting any definite system of transcribing, each translator seems to have chosen his own signs for rendering the sounds of Sanskrit words, and to have chosen them at random. The result is that every Sanskrit word as transcribed by the Chinese Buddhists is a riddle which no ingenuity is able to solve. Who could have guessed that 'Fo-to,' or more frequently 'Fo,' was meant for Buddha? 'Ko-lo-keou-lo' for Râhula, the son of Buddha? 'Po-lo-naï' for Benares? 'Heng-ho' for Ganges? 'Niepan' for Nirvâ*n*a? 'Chamen' for *S*rama*n*a? 'Feïto' for Veda? 'Tcha-li' for Kshattriya? 'Siu-to-lo' for *S*ûdra? 'Fan,' or 'Fan-lon-mo' for Brahma? Sometimes, it is true, the Chinese endeavoured to give, besides the sounds, a translation of the meaning of the Sanskrit words. But the translation of proper names is always very precarious, and it required an intimate knowledge of Sanskrit and Buddhist literature to recognize from these awkward translations the exact form of the proper names for which they were intended. If, in a Chinese translation of *Thukydides*, we read of a person called 'Leader of the people,' we might

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guess his name to have been *Demagogos,* or *Laoegos,* as well as *Agesilaos.* And when the name of the town of *S*ravasti was written Che-wei, which means in Chinese 'where one hears,' it required no ordinary power of combination to find that the name of *S*ravasti was derived from a Sanskrit noun, *s*ravas (Greek κλέος, Russ. slava), which means 'hearing' or 'fame,' and that the etymological meaning of the name of *S*ravasti was intended by the Chinese 'Che-wei.' Besides these names of places and rivers, of kings and saints, there was the whole strange phraseology of Buddhism, of which no dictionary gives any satisfactory explanation. How was even the best Chinese scholar to know that the words which usually mean 'dark shadow' must be taken in the technical sense of Nirvâ*n*a, or becoming absorbed in the Absolute—that 'return-purity' had the same sense—and that a third synonymous expression was to be recognised in a phrase which, in ordinary Chinese, would have the sense of 'transport-figure-crossing-age?' A monastery is called 'origin-door,' instead of 'black-door.' The voice of Buddha is called 'the voice of the dragon;' and his doctrine goes by the name of the 'door of expedients.'

Tedious as these details may seem, it was almost a duty to state them, in order to give an idea of the difficulties which M. Stanislas Julien had to grapple with. Oriental scholars labour under great disadvantages. Few people take an interest in their works, or, if they do, they simply accept the results, but they are unable to appreciate the difficulty with which these results were obtained. Many persons who have read the translation of the Cuneiform Inscriptions are glad, no doubt, to have the authentic and contemporaneous records of Darius and Xerxes. But if they followed the process by which

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scholars such as Grotefend, Burnouf, Lassen, and Rawlinson arrived at their results, they would see that the discovery of the alphabet, the language, the grammar, and the meaning of the inscriptions of the Achaemenian dynasty deserves to be classed with the discoveries of a Kepler, a Newton, or a Faraday. In a similar manner, the mere translation of a Chinese work into French seems a very ordinary performance; but M. Stanislas Julien, who has long been acknowledged as the first Chinese scholar in Europe, had to spend twenty years of incessant labour in order to prepare himself for the task of translating the *Travels of Hiouen-thsang*. He had to learn Sanskrit, no very easy language; he had to study the Buddhist literature written in Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, Mongolian, and Chinese. He had to make vast indices of every proper name connected with Buddhism. Thus only could he shape his own tools, and accomplish what at last he did accomplish. Most persons will remember the interest with which the travels of M.M. Huc and Gabet were read a few years ago, though these two adventurous missionaries were obliged to renounce their original intention of entering India by way of China and Tibet, and were not allowed to proceed beyond the famous capital of Lhassa. If, then, it be considered that there was a traveller, who had made a similar journey twelve hundred years earlier—who had succeeded in crossing the deserts and mountain-passes which separate China from India—who had visited the principal cities of the Indian Peninsula, at a time of which we have no information, from native or foreign sources, as to the state of that country—who had learned Sanskrit, and made a large collection of Buddhist works—who had carried on public disputations with the most eminent philosophers and theologians of the day—who had translated the

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most important works on Buddhism from Sanskrit into Chinese, and left an account of his travels, which still existed in the libraries of China—nay, which had been actually printed and published—we may well imagine the impatience with which all scholars interested in the ancient history of India, and in the subject of Buddhism, looked forward to the publication of so important a work. Hiouen-thsang's name had first been mentioned in Europe by Abel Rémusat and Klaproth. They had discovered some fragments of his travels in a Chinese work on foreign countries and foreign nations. Rémusat wrote to China to procure, if possible, a complete copy of Hiouen-thsang's works. He was informed by Morrison that they were out of print. Still, the few specimens which he had given at the end of his translation of the Foe-Koue-ki had whetted the appetite of Oriental scholars. M. Stanislas Julien succeeded in procuring a copy of Hiouen-thsang in 1838; and after nearly twenty years, spent in preparing a translation of the Chinese traveller, his version is now before us. If there are but few who know the difficulty of a work like that of M. Stanislas Julien, it becomes their duty to speak out, though, after all, perhaps the most intelligible eulogium would be, that in a branch of study where there are no monopolies and no patents, M. Stanislas Julien was the only man in Europe who could produce the article which he has produced in the work before us.

We shall devote the rest of our space to a short account of the life and travels of Hiouen-thsang. Hiouen-thsang was born in a provincial town of China, at a time when the empire was in a chronic state of revolution. His father had left the public service, and had given most of his time to the education of his four children. Two of

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them distinguished themselves at a very early age—one of them, Hiouen-thsang, the future traveller and theologian. The boy was sent to school to a Buddhist monastery, and, after receiving there the necessary instruction, partly from his elder brother, he was himself admitted as a monk at the early age of thirteen. During the next seven years, the young monk travelled about with his brother from place to place, in order to follow the lectures of some of the most distinguished professors. The horrors of war frequently broke in upon his quiet studies, and forced him to seek refuge in the more distant provinces of the empire. At the age of twenty he took priest's orders, and had then already become famous by his vast knowledge. He had studied the chief canonical book of the Buddhist faith, the records of Buddha's life and teaching, the system of ethics and metaphysics; and he was versed in the works of Confucius and Lao-tse. But still his own mind was agitated by doubts. Six years he continued his studies in the chief places of learning in China, and where he came to learn he was frequently asked to teach. At last, when he saw that none, even the most eminent theologians, were able to give him the information he wanted, he formed his resolve of travelling to India. The works of earlier pilgrims, such as Fa-hian and others, were known to him. He knew that in India he should find the originals of the works which in their Chinese translation left so many things doubtful in his mind; and though he knew from the same sources the dangers of his journey, yet 'the glory,' as he says, 'of recovering the Law, which was to be a guide to all men and the means of their salvation, seemed to him worthy of imitation.' In common with several other priests, he addressed a memorial to the Emperor to ask leave for their journey. Leave was refused,

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and the courage of his companions failed. Not that of Hiouen-thsang. His own mother had told him that, soon before she gave birth to him, she had seen her child travelling to the Far West in search of the Law. He was himself haunted by similar visions, and, having long surrendered worldly desires, he resolved to brave all dangers, and to risk his life for the only object for which he thought it worth while to live. He proceeded to the Yellow River, the Hoang-ho, and to the place where the caravans bound for India used to meet, and, though the Governor had sent strict orders not to allow any one to cross the frontier, the young priest, with the assistance of his co-religionists, succeeded in escaping the vigilance of the Chinese 'douaniers.' Spies were sent after him. But so frank was his avowal, and so firm his resolution, which he expressed in the presence of the authorities, that the Governor himself tore his hue and cry to pieces, and allowed him to proceed. Hitherto he had been accompanied by two friends. They now left him, and Hiouen-thsang found himself alone, without a friend and without a guide. He sought for strength in fervent prayer. The next morning a person presented himself, offering his services as a guide. This guide conducted him safely for some distance, but left him when they approached the Desert. There were still five watchtowers to be passed, and there was nothing to indicate the road through the Desert, except the hoofmarks of horses, and skeletons. The traveller followed this melancholy track, and, though misled by the 'mirage' of the Desert, he reached the first tower. Here the arrows of the watchmen would have put an end to his existence and his cherished expedition. But the officer in command, himself a zealous Buddhist, allowed the courageous pilgrim to proceed, and gave him

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letters of recommendation to the officers of the next towers. The last tower, however, was guarded by men inaccessible to bribes, and deaf to reasoning. In order to escape their notice, Hiouen-thsang had to make a long détour. He passed through another desert, and lost his way. The bag in which he carried his water burst, and then even the courage of Hiouen-thsang failed. He began to retrace his steps. But suddenly he stopped. 'I took an oath,' he said, 'never to make a step backward till I had reached India. Why, then, have I come here? It is better I should die proceeding to the West than return to the East and live.' Four nights and five days he travelled through the Desert without a drop of water. He had nothing to refresh himself except his prayers—and what were they? Texts from a work which taught that there was no God, no Creator, no creation,—nothing but mind, minding itself. It is incredible in how exhausted an atmosphere the Divine spark within us will glimmer on, and even warm the dark chambers of the human heart. Comforted by his prayers, Hiouen-thsang proceeded, and arrived after some time at a large lake. He was in the country of the Oïgour Tatars. They received him well, nay, too well. One of the Tatar Khans, himself a Buddhist, sent for the Buddhist pilgrim, and insisted on his staying with him to instruct his people. Remonstrances proved of no avail. But Hiouen-thsang was not to be conquered. 'I know,' he said, 'that the King, in spite of his power, has no power over my mind and my will;' and he refused all nourishment, in order to put an end to his life. *Θανοῦμαι καὶ ἐλευθερήσομαι.* Three days he persevered, and at last the Khan, afraid of the consequences, was obliged to yield to the poor monk. He made him promise to visit him on his return to China, and then to stay

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three years with him. At last, after a delay of one month, during which the Khan and his Court came daily to hear the lessons of their pious guest, the traveller continued his journey with a numerous escort, and with letters of introduction from the Khan to twenty-four Princes whose territories the little caravan had to pass. Their way lay through what is now called Dsungary, across the Musur-dabaghan-mountains, the northern portion of the Belur-tag, the Yaxartes valley, Bactria, and Kâbulistân. We cannot follow them through all the places they passed, though the accounts which he gives of their adventures are most interesting, and the description of the people most important. Here is a description of the Musur-dabaghan-mountains:—

'The top of the mountain rises to the sky. Since the beginning of the world the snow has been accumulating, and is now transformed into vast masses of ice, which never melt, either in spring or summer. Hard and brilliant sheets of snow are spread out till they are lost in the infinite, and mingle with the clouds. If one looks at them, the eyes are dazzled by the splendour. Frozen peaks hang down over both sides of the road, some hundred feet high, and twenty feet or thirty feet thick. It is not without difficulty and danger that the traveller can clear them or climb over them. Besides, there are squalls of wind, and tornadoes of snow which attack the pilgrims. Even with double shoes, and in thick furs one cannot help trembling and shivering.'

During the seven days that Hiouen-thsang crossed these Alpine passes he lost fourteen of his companions.

What is most important, however, in this early portion of the Chinese traveller is the account which he gives of the high degree of civilization among the tribes of Central Asia. We had gradually accustomed ourselves to believe in an early civilization of Egypt, of Babylon, of China, of India; but now that we find the hordes of Tatary possessing in the seventh century the chief arts and institutions of an advanced society, we shall soon

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have to drop the name of barbarians altogether. The theory of M. Oppert, who ascribes the original invention of the cuneiform letters and a civilization anterior to that of Babylon and Nineveh to a Turanian or Scythian race, will lose much of its apparent improbability; for no new wave of civilisation had reached these countries between the cuneiform period of their literature and history and the time of Hiouen-thsang's visit. In the kingdom of Okini, on the western frontier of China, Hiouen-thsang found an active commerce, gold, silver, and copper coinage; monasteries, where the chief works of Buddhism were studied, and an alphabet derived from Sanskrit. As he travelled on he met with mines, with agriculture, including pears, plums, peaches, almonds, grapes, pomegranates, rice, and wheat. The inhabitants were dressed in silk and woollen materials. There were musicians in the chief cities who played on the flute and the guitar. Buddhism was the prevailing religion, but there were traces of an earlier worship, the Bactrian fire-worship. The country was everywhere studded with halls, monasteries, monuments, and statues. Samarkand formed at that early time a kind of Athens, and its manners were copied by all the tribes in the neighbourhood. Balkh, the old capital of Bactria, was still an important place on the Oxus, well fortified, and full of sacred buildings. And the details which our traveller gives of the exact circumference of the cities, the number of their inhabitants, the products of the soil, the articles of trade, can leave no doubt in our minds that he relates what he had seen and heard himself. A new page in the history of the world is here opened, and new ruins pointed out, which would reward the pickaxe of a Layard.

But we must not linger. Our traveller, as we said, had

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entered India by way of Kabul. Shortly before he arrived at Pou-lou-cha-pou-lo, *i.e.* the Sanskrit Purushapura, the modern Peshawer, Hiouen-thsang heard of an extraordinary cave, where Buddha had formerly converted a dragon, and had promised his new pupil to leave him his shadow, in order that, whenever the evil passions of his dragon-nature should revive, the aspect of his master's shadowy features might remind him of his former vows. This promise was fulfilled, and the dragon-cave became a famous place of pilgrimage. Our traveller was told that the roads leading to the cave were extremely dangerous, and infested by robbers—that for three years none of the pilgrims had ever returned from the cave. But he replied—'It would be difficult during a hundred thousand Kalpas to meet one single time with the true shadow of Buddha; how could I, having come so near, pass on without going to adore it?' He left his companions behind, and after asking in vain for a guide, he met at last with a boy who showed him to a farm belonging to a convent. Here he found an old man who undertook to act as his guide. They had hardly proceeded a few miles when they were attacked by five robbers. The monk took off his cap and displayed his ecclesiastical robes. 'Master,' said one of the robbers, 'where are you going?' Hiouen-thsang replied, 'I desire to adore the shadow of Buddha.' 'Master,' said the robber, 'have you not heard that these roads are full of bandits?' 'Robbers are men,' Hiouen-thsang exclaimed, 'and at present, when I am going to adore the shadow of Buddha, even though the roads were full of wild beasts, I should walk on without fear. Surely, then, I ought not to fear you, as you are men whose heart is possessed of pity.' The robbers were moved by these words, and opened their hearts to the true faith. After this little in-

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cident Hiouen-thsang proceeded with his guide. He passed a stream rushing down between two precipitous walls of rock. In the rock itself there was a door which opened. All was dark. But Hiouen-thsang entered, advanced towards the east, then moved fifty steps backwards, and began his devotions. He made one hundred salutations, but he saw nothing. He reproached himself bitterly with his former sins—he cried, and abandoned himself to utter despair, because the shadow of Buddha would not appear before him. At last, after many prayers and invocations, he saw on the eastern wall a dim light, of the size of a saucepan, such as the Buddhist monks carry in their hands. But it disappeared. He continued praying full of joy and pain, and again he saw a light, which vanished like lightning. Then he vowed, full of devotion and love, that he would never leave the place till he had seen the shadow of the 'Venerable of the age.' After two hundred prayers, the cave was suddenly bathed in light, and the shadow of Buddha, of a brilliant white colour, rose majestically on the wall, as when the clouds suddenly open and display, all at once, the marvellous image of the 'Mountain of Light.' A dazzling splendour lighted up the features of the divine countenance. Hiouen-thsang was lost in contemplation and wonder, and would not turn his eyes away from the sublime and incomparable object . . . After he awoke from his trance, he called in six men, and commanded them to light a fire in the cave, in order to burn incense; but, as the approach of the light made the shadow of Buddha disappear, the fire was extinguished. Then five of the men saw the shadow, but the sixth saw nothing. The old man who had acted as guide was astounded when Hiouen-thsang told him the vision. 'Master,' he said, 'without the sincerity of your faith, and the

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energy of your vows, you could not have seen such a miracle.'

This is the account given by Hiouen-thsang's biographers. But we must say, to the credit of Hiouen-thsang himself, that in the *Si-yu-ki*, which contains his own diary, the story is told in a different way. The cave is described with almost the same words. But afterwards, the writer continues:—'Formerly, the shadow of Buddha was seen in the cave, bright, like his natural appearance, and with all the marks of his divine beauty. One might have said, it was Buddha himself. For some centuries, however, it can no longer be seen completely. Though one does see something, it is only a feeble and doubtful resemblance. If a man prays with sincere faith, and if he has received from above a secret impression, he sees the shadow clearly, but he cannot enjoy the sight for any length of time.'

From Peshawer, the scene of this extraordinary miracle, Hiouen-thsang proceeded to Kashmír, visited the chief towns of Central India, and arrived at last in Magadha, the Holy Land of the Buddhists. Here he remained five years, devoting all his time to the study of Sanskrit and Buddhist literature, and inspecting every place hallowed by the recollections of the past. He then passed through Bengal, and proceeded to the south, with a view of visiting Ceylon, the chief seat of Buddhism. Baffled in that wish, he crossed the peninsula from east to west, ascended the Malabar coast, reached the Indus, and, after numerous excursions to the chief places of North-Western India, returned to Magadha, to spend there, with his old friends, some of the happiest years of his life. The route of his journeyings is laid down in a map drawn with exquisite skill by M. Vivien de Saint-Martin. At last he was obliged to return to China, and, passing

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through the Penjab, Kabulistan, and Bactria, he reached the Oxus, followed its course nearly to its sources on the plateau of Pamir, and, after staying some time in the three chief towns of Turkistan, Khasgar, Yarkand, and Khoten, he found himself again, after sixteen years of travels, dangers, and studies, in his own native country. His fame had spread far and wide, and the poor pilgrim, who had once been hunted by imperial spies and armed policemen, was now received with public honours by the Emperor himself. His entry into the capital was like a triumph. The streets were covered with carpets, flowers were scattered, and banners flying. Soldiers were drawn up, the magistrates went out to meet him, and all the monks of the neighbourhood marched along in solemn procession. The trophies that adorned this triumph, carried by a large number of horses, were of a peculiar kind. First, 150 grains of the dust of Buddha; secondly, a golden statue of the great Teacher; thirdly, a similar statue of sandal-wood; fourthly, a statue of sandal-wood, representing Buddha as descending from heaven; fifthly, a statue of silver; sixthly, a golden statue of Buddha conquering the dragons; seventhly, a statue of sandal-wood, representing Buddha as a preacher; lastly, a collection of 657 works in 520 volumes. The Emperor received the traveller in the Phœnix Palace, and, full of admiration for his talents and wisdom, invited him to accept a high office in the Government. This Hiouen-thsang declined. 'The soul of the administration,' he said, 'is still the doctrine of Confucius;' and he would dedicate the rest of his life to the Law of Buddha. The Emperor thereupon asked him to write an account of his travels, and assigned him a monastery where he might employ his leisure in translating the works he had brought back from India.

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His travels were soon written and published, but the translation of the Sanskrit MSS. occupied the whole rest of his life. It is said that the number of works translated by him, with the assistance of a large staff of monks, amounted to 740, in 1,335 volumes. Frequently he might be seen meditating on a difficult passage, when suddenly it seemed as if a higher spirit had enlightened his mind. His soul was cheered, as when a man walking in darkness sees all at once the sun piercing the clouds and shining in its full brightness; and, unwilling to trust to his own understanding, he used to attribute his knowledge to a secret inspiration of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas. When he found that the hour of death approached, he had all his property divided among the poor. He invited his friends to come and see him, and to take a cheerful leave of that impure body of Hiouen-thsang. 'I desire,' he said, 'that whatever merits I may have gained by good works may fall upon other people. May I be born again with them in the heaven of the blessed, be admitted to the family of Mi-le, and serve the Buddha of the future, who is full of kindness and affection. When I descend again upon earth to pass through other forms of existence, I desire at every new birth to fulfil my duties towards Buddha, and arrive at the last at the 'highest and most perfect intelligence.' He died in the year 664 —about the same time that Mohammedanism was pursuing its bloody conquests in the East, and Christianity began to shed its pure light over the dark forests of Germany.

It is impossible to do justice to the character of so extraordinary a man as Hiouen-thsang in so short a sketch as we have been able to give. If we knew only his own account of his life and travels—the volume which has just been published at Paris—we should be ignorant

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of the motives which guided him and of the sufferings which he underwent. Happily, two of his friends and pupils had left an account of their teacher, and M. Stanislas Julien has acted wisely in beginning his collection of the Buddhist Pilgrims with the translation of that biography. There we learn something of the man himself and of that silent enthusiasm which supported him in his arduous work. There we see him braving the dangers of the desert, scrambling along glaciers, crossing over torrents, and quietly submitting to the brutal violence of Indian Thugs. There we see him rejecting the tempting invitations of Khans, Kings, and Emperors, and quietly pursuing among strangers, within the bleak walls of the cell of a Buddhist college, the study of a foreign language, the key to the sacred literature of his faith. There we see him rising to eminence, acknowledged as an equal by his former teachers, as a superior by the most distinguished scholars of India; the champion of the orthodox faith, an arbiter at councils, the favourite of Indian kings. In his own work there is hardly a word about all this. We do not wish to disguise his weaknesses, such as they appear in the same biography. He was a credulous man easily imposed upon by crafty priests, still more easily carried away by his own superstitions; but he deserved to have lived in better times, and we almost grudge so high and noble a character to a country not our own, and to a religion unworthy of such a man. Of selfishness we find no trace in him. His whole life belonged to the faith in which he was born, and the objects of his labour was not so much to perfect himself as to benefit others. He was an honest man. And strange, and stiff, and absurd, and outlandish as his outward appearance may seem, there is something in the face of that

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poor Chinese monk, with his yellow skin and his small oblique eyes, that appeals to our sympathy—something in his life, and the work of his life, that places him by right among the heroes of Greece, the martyrs of Rome, the knights of the crusades, the explorers of the Arctic regions—something that makes us feel it a duty to inscribe his name on the roll of the 'forgotten worthies' of the human race. There is a higher consanguinity than that of the blood which runs through our veins—that of the blood which makes our hearts beat with the same indignation and the same joy. And there is a higher nationality than that of being governed by the same imperial dynasty—that of our common allegiance to the Father and Ruler of all mankind.

It is but right to state that we owe the publication, at least of the second volume of M. Julien's work, to the liberality of the Court of Directors of the East India Company. We have had several opportunities of pointing out the creditable manner in which that body has patronized literary and scientific works connected with the East, and we congratulate the Chairman, Colonel Sykes, and the President of the Board of Control, Mr. Vernon Smith, on the excellent choice they have made in this instance. Nothing can be more satisfactory than that nearly the whole edition of a work which would have remained unpublished without their liberal assistance has been sold in little more than a month.

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BUDDHA AND HIS CRITICS.

To the Editor of the Times.

Sir,—Mr. Francis Barham, of Bath, has protested in a letter, printed in *The Times* of the 24th of April, against my interpretations of Nirvâ*n*a, or the *summun bonum* of the Buddhists. He maintains that the Nirvâ*n*a in which the Buddhists believe, and which they represent as the highest goal of their religion and philosophy, means union and communion with God, or absorption of the individual soul by the divine essence, and not, as I tried to show in my articles on the *Buddhist Pilgrims,* utter annihilation.

I must not take up much more of your space with so abstruse a subject as Buddhist metaphysics; but at the same time I cannot allow Mr. Barham's protest to pass unnoticed. The authorities which he brings forward against my account of Buddhism, and particularly against my interpretation of Nirvâ*n*a, seem formidable enough. There is Neander, the great church historian—Creuzer, the famous scholar—and Huc, the well-known traveller and missionary,—all interpreting, as Mr. Barham says, the Nirvâ*n*a of the Buddhists in the sense of an apotheosis of the human soul, as it was taught in the Vedânta philosophy of the Brahmans, the Sufiism of the Persians, and the Christian mysticism of Eckhart and Tauler, and not in the sense of absolute annihilation.

Now, with regard to Neander and Creuzer, I beg to

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observe that their works were written before the canonical books of the Buddhists, composed in Sanskrit, had been discovered, or at least before they had been sent to Europe, and been analysed by European scholars. Besides, neither Neander nor Creuzer was an Oriental scholar, and their knowledge of the subject could only be second-hand. It was in 1828 that Mr. Brian Houghton Hodgson, then resident at the Court of Nepal, gave the first intimation of the existence of a large religious literature written in Sanskrit, and preserved by the Buddhists of Nepal as the canonical books of their faith. It was in 1829 that the same eminent scholar and naturalist presented the first set of these books to the Royal Asiatic Society in London. In 1837 he made a similar gift to the Société Asiatique of Paris, and some of the most important works were transmitted by him to the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It was in 1844 that the late Eugène Burnouf published, after a careful study of these documents, his classical work, *Introduction à l'Histoire du Buddhisme Indien*, and it is from this book that our knowledge of Buddhism may be said to date. Several works have since been published, which have added considerably to the stock of authentic information on the doctrine of the great Indian Reformer. There is Burnouf's translation of *Le Lotus de la Bonne Loi*, published after the death of that lamented scholar, together with numerous essays, in 1852. There are two interesting works by the Rev. Spence Hardy—*Eastern Monachism*, London, 1850, and *A Manual of Buddhism*, London, 1853; and there are the publications of M. Stanislas Julien, E. Foucaux, the Hon. George Turnour, Professor H. H. Wilson, and others, alluded to in my article on the *Buddhist Pilgrims*. It is from these works alone that we can derive correct and authentic information on Buddhism, and

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not from Neander's *History of the Christian Church* or from Creuzer's *Symbolik*.

If any one will consult these works, he will find that the discussions on the true meaning of Nirvâ*n*a are not of modern date, and that, at a very early period, different philosophical schools among the Buddhists of India, and different teachers who spread the doctrine of Buddhism abroad, propounded every conceivable opinion as to the orthodox explanation of this term. Even in one and the same school we find different parties maintaining different views on the meaning of Nirvâ*n*a. There is the school of the Svâbhâvikas, which still exists in Nepal. The Svâbhâvikas maintain that nothing exists but nature, or rather substance, and that this substance exists by itself (svabhâvât), without a Creator or a Ruler. It exists, however, under two forms: in the state of Prav*r*itti, as active, or in the state of Nirv*r*itti, as passive. Human beings, who, like everything else, exist svabhâvât, 'by themselves,' are supposed to be capable of arriving at Nirv*r*itti, or passiveness, which is nearly synonymous with Nirvâ*n*a. But here the Svâbhâvikas branch off into two sects. Some believe that Nirv*r*itti is repose, others that it is annihilation; and the former add, 'were it even annihilation (*s*ûnyatâ), it would still be good, man being otherwise doomed to an eternal migration through all the forms of nature; the more desirable of which are little to be wished; and the less so, at any price to be shunned.'[1]

What was the original meaning of Nirvâ*n*a may perhaps best be seen from the etymology of this technical term. Every Sanskrit scholar knows that Nirvâ*n*a means 'blowing out,' and not absorption. The human soul,

[1] See Burnouf, *Introduction*, p. 441; Hodgson, *As. Res.* xvi.

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when it arrives at its perfection, is blown out,[1] if we use the phraseology of the Buddhists, like a lamp; it is not absorbed, as the Brahmans say, like a drop in the ocean. Neither in the system of Buddhist philosophy, nor in the philosophy from which Buddha seems chiefly to have borrowed, was there any place left for a Divine Being by which the human soul could be absorbed. Sânkhya philosophy, in its original form, claims the name of an-îsvara, 'lordless' or 'atheistic' as its distinctive title. Its final object is not absorption in God, but Moksha, deliverance of the soul from all pain and illusion. It is doubtful whether the term Nirvâ*n*a was coined by Buddha. It occurs in the literature of the Brahmans as a synonyme of Moksha, deliverance; Nirv*r*itti, cessation; Apavarga, release; Ni*h*sreyas, *summum bonum*. It is used in this sense in the Mahâbhârata, and it is explained in the Amara Kosha as having the meaning of 'blowing out, applied to a fire and to a sage.'[2] Unless, however, we succeed in tracing this term in works anterior to Buddha, we may suppose that it was invented by him in order to express that meaning of the *summum bonum*, which he was the first to preach, and which his disciples explained in the sense of absolute annihilation.

The earliest authority to which we can go back, if we want to know the original character of Buddhism, is the Buddhist Canon, as settled after the death of Buddha at the first Council. It is called Tripi*t*aka, or the Three Baskets, the first containing the Sûtras, or the discourses of Buddha; the second the Vinaya, or his code of morality;

[1] 'Calm,' 'without wind,' as Nirvâ*n*a is sometimes explained, is expressed in Sanskrit by Nirvâta. See *Am. Kosha*, sub. v.

[2] Different views of the Nirvâ*n*a, as conceived by the Tîrthakas or the Brahmans, may be seen in an extract from the Lankâvatâra, translated by Burnouf, p. 514.

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the third, the Abhidharma, or the system of metaphysics. The first was compiled by Ananda, the second by Upâli, the third by Kâsyapa—all of them the pupils and friends of Buddha. It may be that these collections, as we now possess them, were finally arranged, not at the first, but at the third Council. Yet, even then, we have no earlier, no more authentic, documents from which we could form an opinion as to the original teaching of Buddha; and the Nirvâ*n*a, as taught in the metaphysics of Kâ*s*yapa, and particularly in the Pra*g*nâ-pâramitâ, is annihilation, not absorption. Buddhism, therefore, if tested by its own canonical books, cannot be freed from the charge of Nihilism, whatever may have been its character in the mind of its founder, and whatever changes it may have undergone in later times, and among races less inured to metaphysical discussions than the Hindús.

The ineradicable feeling of dependence on something else, which is the life-spring of all religion, was completely numbed in the early Buddhist metaphysicians, and it was only after several generations had passed away, and after Buddhism had become the creed of millions, that this feeling returned with increased warmth, changing, as I said in my article, the very Nothing into a paradise, and deifying the very Buddha who had denied the existence of a Deity. That this has been the case in China we know from the interesting works of the Abbé Huc, and from other sources, such as the *Catechism of the Shamans, or the Laws and Regulations of the Priesthood of Buddha in China*, translated by Ch. F. Neumann, London, 1831. In India, also, Buddhism, as soon as it became a popular religion, had to speak a more human language than that of metaphysical Pyrrhonism. But, if it did so, it was because it was shamed into it. This we may see from the very nick-

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names which the Brahmans apply to their opponents, the Bauddhas. They call them Nâstikas—those who maintain that there is nothing; *S*ûnyavadins—those who maintain that there is a universal void.

The only ground, therefore, on which we may stand, if we wish to defend the founder of Buddhism against the charges of Nihilism and Atheism, is this, that, as some of the Buddhists admit, the 'Basket of Metaphysics' was rather the work of his pupils, and not of Buddha himself.[1] This distinction between the authentic words of Buddha and the canonical books in general, is mentioned more than once. The priesthood of Ceylon, when the manifest errors with which their canonical commentaries abound, were brought to their notice, retreated from their former position, and now assert that it is only the express words of Buddha that they receive as undoubted truth.[2]

And there is a passage in a Buddhist work which reminds us somewhat of the last page of Dean Milman's *History of Christianity*:—

> 'The words of the priesthood are good; those of the Rahats (saints) are better; but those of the All-knowing are the best of all.''

This is an argument which Mr. Francis Barham might have used with more success, and by which he might have justified, if not the first disciples, at least the original founder of Buddhism. Nay, there is a saying of Buddha's which tends to show that all metaphysical discussion was regarded by him as vain and useless. It is a saying

[1] See Burnouf, *Introduction*, p. 41. 'Abuddhoktam abhidharma-*s*âstram.' Ibid. p. 454. According to the Tibetan Buddhists, however, Buddha propounded the Abhidharma when he was 51 years old. *As. Res.*, xx. p. 339.

[2] *Eastern Monachism*, p. 171.

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mentioned in one of the MSS. belonging to the Bodleian Library. As it has never been published before, I may be allowed to quote it in the original: 'Sadasad vi*k*âram na sahate,'—'The ideas of being and not-being do not admit of discussion,'—a tenet which, if we consider that it was enunciated before the time of the Eleatic philosophers of Greece, and long before Hegel's *Logic*, might certainly have saved us many a tough and indigestible argument.

A few passages from the Buddhist writings of Nepal and Ceylon will best show that the *horror nihili* was not felt by the metaphysicians of former ages in the same degree as it is felt by ourselves. The famous hymn which resounds in heaven when the luminous rays of the smile of Buddha penetrate through the clouds, is 'All is transitory, all is misery, all is void, all is without substance.' Again, it is said in the Pra*g*nâ-pâramitâ,[1] that Buddha began to think that he ought to conduct all creatures to perfect Nirvâ*n*a. But he reflected that there are really no creatures which ought to be conducted, nor creatures that conduct; and, nevertheless, he did conduct all creatures to perfect Nirvâ*n*a. Then, continues the text, why is it said that there are neither creatures which arrive at complete Nirvâ*n*a, nor creatures which conduct there? Because it is illusion which makes creatures what they are. It is as if a clever juggler, or his pupil, made an immense number of people to appear on the high road, and after having made them to appear, made them to disappear again. Would there be anybody who had killed, or murdered, or annihilated, or caused them to vanish? No. And it is the same with Buddha. He conducts an immense, innumerable, infinite number of creatures to complete Nir-

[1] Burnouf, *Introduction*, p. 462.

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vâ*n*a, and yet there are neither creatures which are conducted, nor creatures that conduct. If a Bodhisattva, on hearing this explanation of the Law, is not frightened, then it may be said that he has put on the great armour.'[1]

Soon after, we read: 'The name of Buddha is nothing but a word. The name of Bodhisattva is nothing but a word. The name of Perfect Wisdom (Pra*g*nâ-pâramitâ) is nothing but a word. The name is indefinite, as if one says "I," for "I" is something indefinite, because it has no limits.'

Burnouf gives the gist of the whole Pra*g*nâ-pâramitâ in the following words:—'The highest Wisdom, or what is to be known, has no more real existence than he who has to know, or the Bodhisattva; no more than he who does know, or the Buddha.' But Burnouf remarks that nothing of this kind is to be found in the Sûtras, and that Gautama *S*âkya-muni, the son of *S*uddhodana, would never have become the founder of a popular religion if he had started with similar absurdities. In the Sûtras the reality of the objective world is denied; the reality of form is denied; the reality of the individual, or the 'I,' is equally denied. But the existence of a subject, of something like the Purusha, the thinking substance of the Sânkhya philosophy, is spared. Something at least exists with respect to which everything else may be said not to exist. The germs of the ideas, developed in the Pra*g*nâ-pâramitâ, may indeed be discovered here and there in the Sûtras.[2] But they had not yet ripened into that poisonous plant which soon became an indispensable narcotic in the schools of the later Buddhists. Buddha himself, however, though, perhaps, not a Nihilist, was certainly an Atheist. He

[1] Burnouf, *Introduction*, p, 478. [2] Ibid, p. 520.

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does not deny distinctly either the existence of gods, or that of God; but he ignores the former, and he is ignorant of the latter. Therefore, if Nirvâ*n*a in his mind was not yet complete annihilation, still less could it have been absorption into a Divine essence. It was nothing but selfishness, in the metaphysical sense of the word—a relapse into that being which is nothing but itself. This is the most charitable view which we can take of the Nirvâ*n*a, even as conceived by Buddha himself, and it is the view which Burnouf derived from the canonical books of the Northern Buddhists. On the other hand, Mr. Spence Hardy, who in his works follows exclusively the authority of the Southern Buddhists, the Pâli and Singhalese works of Ceylon, arrives at the same result. We read in his work: 'The Rahat (Arhat), who has reached Nirvâ*n*a, but is not yet a Pratyeka-buddha, or a Supreme Buddha, says: "I await the appointed time for the cessation of existence. I have no wish to live; I have no wish to die. Desire is extinct."'

In a very interesting dialogue between Milinda and Nâgasena, communicated by Mr. Spence Hardy, Nirvâ*n*a is represented as something which has no antecedent cause, no qualities, no locality. It is something of which the utmost we may assert is, that it is:—

Nâgasena. Can a man, by his natural strength go from the city of Sâgal to the forest of Himâla?

Milinda. Yes.

Nâgasena. But could any man, by his natural strength, bring the forest of Himâla to this city of Sâgal?

Milinda. No.

Nâgasena. In like manner, though the fruition of the paths may cause the accomplishment of Nirvâ*n*a, no cause by which Nirvâ*n*a is produced can be declared. The path that leads to Nirvâ*n*a may be pointed out, but not any cause for its production. Why? because that which constitutes Nirvâ*n*a is beyond all com-

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putation,—a mystery, not to be understood. . . . It cannot be said that it is produced, nor that it is not produced; that it is past or future or present. Nor can it be said that it is the seeing of the eye, or the hearing of the ear, or the smelling of the nose, or the tasting of the tongue, or the feeling of the body.

Milinda. Then you speak of a thing that is not; you merely say that Nirvâna is Nirvâna;—therefore there is no Nirvâna.

Nâgasena. Great King, Nirvâna *is.*

Another question also, whether Nirvâna is something different from the beings that enter into it, has been asked by the Buddhists themselves:—

Milinda. Does the being who acquires it attain something that has previously existed?—or is it his own product—a formation peculiar to himself?

Nâgasena. Nirvâna does not exist previously to its reception; nor is it that which was brought into existence. Still to the being who attains it, there is Nirvâna.

In opposition, therefore, to the more advanced views of the Nihilistic philosophers of the North, Nâgasena maintains the existence of Nirvâna, and of the being that has entered Nirvâna. He does not say that Buddha is a mere word. When asked by King Milinda, whether the all-wise Buddha exists, he replies:

Nâgasena. He who is the most meritorious (Bhagavat) does exist.

Milinda. Then can you point out to me the place in which he exists?

Nâgasena. Our Bhagavat has attained Nirvâna, where there is no repetition of birth. We cannot say that he is here, or he is there. When a fire is extinguished, can it be said that it is here, or that it is there? Even so, our Buddha has attained extinction (Nirvâna). He is like the Sun that has set behind the Astagiri mountain. It cannot be said that he is here, or that he is there: but we can point him out by the discourses he delivered. In them he lives.

At the present moment, the great majority of Buddhists

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would probably be quite incapable of understanding the abstract nonsense of their ancient masters. The view taken of Nirvâṇa in China, Mongolia, and Tatary may probably be as gross as that which most of the Mohammedans form of their Paradise. But, in the history of religion, the historian must go back to the earliest and most original documents that are to be obtained. Thus only may he hope to understand the later developments which, whether for good or evil, every form of faith has had to undergo.

YOUR REVIEWER.

OXFORD, *April* 24, 1857.

STEPHEN AUSTIN, PRINTER, HERTFORD.

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